

PEACE WITH THE LANDLORD

Janet Mabie

"Speaking of horse-and-buggy days, what about the situation between landlords and tenants?" The supposedly instinctive enmity between the two divisions of mankind is, or should be, as outmoded as the side whisker. But few landlords know this, and few tenants realize that they have rights and the power to see that they are maintained. Miss Mabie tells all about the new deal in rent-payer and rent-collector co-operation.

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEN

Harry Hirschman

Now that women have won almost all the rights they were fighting for and hostilities are considered to be on the wane, Mr. Hirschman sends this bulletin from the male front of the War Between Men and Women, immortalized by James Thurber. There seems to be no hope for an early armistice, for he reports that women have acquired not only equality but "equality plus all their traditional feminine prerogatives." And the author provides a detailed platform under which all remaining free men can start the big offensive.

THE TWO DICTATORS

Emil Ludwig

The eminent German biographer analyzes and compares two of the rulers of Europe who, though they have established a rigid order of life in their own countries, seem to have an infinite capacity for turning into chaos whatever order there may be in international affairs. Hitler and Mussolini, their backgrounds, their characters, and their aims, are revealingly exposed to Ludwig's sharp knife.

ousting JUDGE LYNCH

Ben Cothran

Congressional antilynching legislation is no cure for America's most sordid sport. Besides being unenforceable, such a law as the proposed Gavagan act completely ignores the deep-rooted cause of the sadistic Roman holidays the South enjoys every so often. No, says Mr. Cothran, "vastly more important is to stop the human decay that has cankered the South for a century; to humanize a civilization that permits present conditions among share croppers, textile workers, and yeoman farmers, enforcing a system that exploits not only negroes but a majority of the white population."

HENRY GODDARD LEACH, *Editor*

SEPTEMBER 1937

Soldiers as Educators. <i>Editorial Foreword</i>	HENRY GODDARD LEACH	97
Where the Jews Fail	MAURICE M. FEUERLICHT	99
The Maternity Racket	BETTIE DILBECK	105
Life after Death.	DENIS CONAN DOYLE	110
Is Installment Buying Sound? <i>A Debate</i>		
I — Mortgaging the Future for Disaster	CHARLES F. RONAYNE	114
II — The Little Man Needs Credit	ARTHUR J. MORRIS	117
Confessions of a Professional Listener	ELLIS O. JONES	119
Citizens of the World	SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA	123
The Fate of the Semiclassic.	FORD MADDOX FORD	126
<i>The Sad State of Publishing</i>		
Immorality in Our Schools	GERALDINE COURTNEY	129
Homecoming. <i>A Poem</i>	NEILSON ABEEL	133
Farewell Suburbia	FARNSWORTH CROWDER	134
Vaucluse. <i>A College for Middle Age</i>	J. H. WALLIS	138
We Who Have a Rendezvous with Death.	ANONYMOUS	141
The Artist's Point of View	RALPH M. PEARSON	143
A Page for Poets		
We Are All Poets	ELIOT KAYS STONE	144
Toasts		II
The Book Forum		IV
Our Rostrum		X

VOL. XCVIII—No. 3

THE FORUM, combined with THE CENTURY MAGAZINE (Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.), is published monthly by the Forum Publishing Company, Inc. 35 cents a copy; \$4.00 a year; foreign subscription \$5.00, Canadian \$4.50. Publication office, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, N. H. Editorial and general offices, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y. Back copies not over three months old, 35 cents; all other back copies, \$1.00. Five weeks' advance notice required for change of address, and such notices must supply the old address as well as the new. *Indexed in the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.*

All manuscripts should be typewritten, accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelope, and addressed to the Editor at the New York office. No responsibility is assumed for the return of unsolicited manuscripts.

Printed in the United States of America. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Concord, N. H., under Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright 1937, in the United States and Great Britain by Forum Publishing Company, Inc. No article in this issue may be reprinted in whole or in condensed form without express permission from the publishers.

★ Subscribe to FORUM ★ A Meeting Place for Keen Minds

IT GIVES YOU BOTH SIDES, ALL SIDES OF IMPORTANT
QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

FORUM PUBLISHING COMPANY, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York City

Please enter my subscription to FORUM for

☐ 1 year \$4 ☐ 2 years \$6 ☐ 3 years \$8
☐ Send me a bill ☐ My remittance is enclosed

Name

Address

Where the Jews Fail

by MAURICE M. FEUERLICHT

FAR BACK in the dim recesses of my childhood memory there burns the recollection of knowledge — gleaned from many sources available to alert childish ears — that I was Jewish. More than that, I learned from countless dinner-table discussions and from my father's heated debates with evening callers that, somehow, Jews were different from other people and that there was a "Jewish problem."

Through the years I heard much and read more about this "problem" and so I became keenly aware of the fact that, for some reason, the Jews are a people apart from their neighbors. As personal experience added the judgment of maturity to vicarious knowledge, two unfortunate facts became increasingly apparent. First, Jews as a group do not act like normal people, and by "normal" I merely mean the majority of citizens. Second, nobody can make an honest effort to probe the secret of Jewish differentiation, lest his head figuratively roll in the sand.

Jews, as a rule, are hypersensitive on the subject of their Judaism, even though they may never be quite sure just what their Judaism is. Consequently, Gentiles dare not discuss the topic in the light of healthy, helpful reason, lest they be accused of "prejudice." On the other hand, for many reasons, few Jews care to risk the storm of indignation sure to break on the head of any member of the group so rash as to express a sentiment other than bitter complaint against Jewish persecution by the world at large. The cry of "Renegade!" is not pleasant in sensitive ears.

Before I commit myself, I too want to forestall some of the criticism I may receive, by pointing out that as the son of a rabbi and the product of a Jewish environment I am hardly prejudiced against Jews. Regardless of the nature of my own peculiarly personal religious views, I shall speak of "we Jews" throughout my discussion, in order to make it perfectly

clear that I have no desire to avoid being known as a Jew.

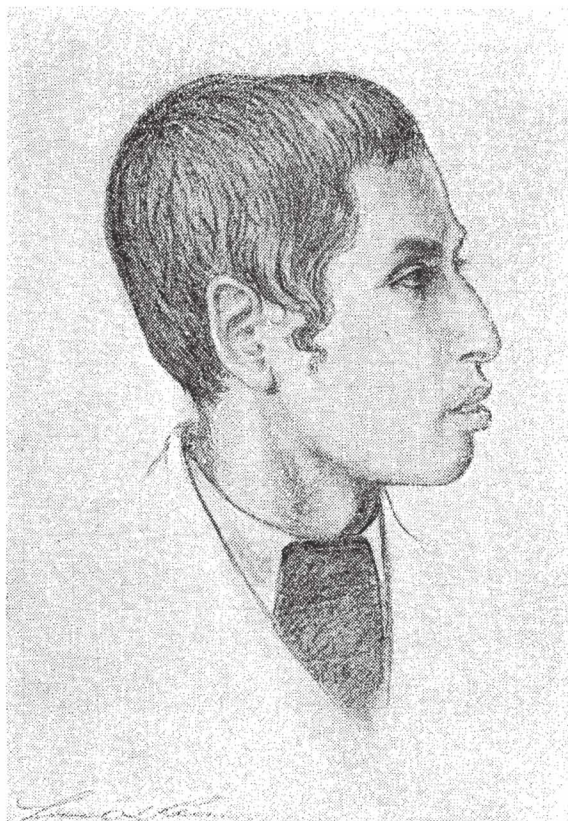
I do not believe there are any Jews at birth. The Jewish consciousness is given seed and cultivated consistently, however, from the moment the young Jew is capable of understanding the spoken word — perhaps before that. Every religious experience thereafter tends to remind him that he is not like his friends the Gentiles. Such was my own experience, which may be taken as typical in that I was raised with less than the usual orthodox Jewish inflexibility but with more training than that found in most Reformed Jewish homes. My earliest memory is the celebration of the Feast of Lights, or Hanukkah. I sat at my father's feet, as have countless other Jewish youngsters, and heard him tell the thrilling story of Judas Maccabeus and his brave band who risked their lives for their religion. Each year at Hanukkah I lighted candles in commemoration of the release from the oppressor's hand and sang:

*Children of the martyr race
Whether free or fettered,
Wake the echoes with your song
Where ye may be scattered.*

Along with my Jewish playmates, I had that theme, "children of the martyr race," dinned into my consciousness so deeply that it became a part of my very being, a basic element of my emotional and mental life. Almost the first words I understood, were *oppressed people, martyrs, prejudice, persecution*. When little Gentiles called me "Jew," my parents carefully explained that the boys meant to insult me, that the world didn't like Jews and I should be like Judas Maccabeus. I quickly learned that, for some reason, the world had it in for me, and my home instruction never allowed me to forget the past. I had a long training in martyrology, taught with all the subtle and sublimating refinements that 3,000 years

of bitter experience brought to the instruction. Wise Alexander Pope once wrote:

*'Tis education forms the common mind;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined.*



Jewish Type: Egyptian

MY ABNORMAL HERITAGE

SCIENTISTS have a maxim, of forbidding sound, which declares that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny." Translated roughly, it means that the physical life history of the individual follows the life history of the race. This is true in fields beyond the physical and biological experience of the race. Vicariously, every good little Jewish youngster suffers the pains of persecution which have been visited on his group. After Hanukkah, I celebrated Passover and hated Pharaoh with all the fervor of my childish heart because he persecuted the Jews. Lest I forget the hasty flight through the Red Sea, I ate unleavened bread, matzoth, to remind me of hardships suffered 2,000 years ago. When Purim came, I hated Haman and hissed his name because he wanted to exterminate the Jews. At Friday-night synagogue services I heard my father roll out, in thunderous terms, indignant complaints against

the "hand of the oppressor" and I heard him speak with pride of Jewish survival after "three thousand years of persecution."

In Sunday school and at home, while other little children learned fairy tales and played with tin soldiers, I learned of the bloody pogroms of Kishinev; I quailed at the tortures of the Spanish Inquisition; I resented deeply the Jewish confinement to the ghetto and the pale; I read of the distinctive clothing forced on the Jew; my blood boiled at the accusations of the "Protocols of Zion" — charges of Jewish sacrifice of Christian children, Jewish schemes for world power. With all other Jewish children, I had a vicarious but none the less realistically sordid childhood and, like them, I emerged, without realizing it, a first-class case of mild paranoia. I knew the world had a grudge against me. As I grew older, this persecution complex grew stronger. I did not learn a great deal about the religious principles of Judaism but I certainly knew all about the Dreyfus case, the Ku Klux Klan, the "numerus clausus" restricting Jewish college quotas, country-club and hotel restrictions. That knowledge, more than anything else, constitutes the Jewish consciousness we have today.

Can it be said that we Jews are normal? We are more conscious of our maltreatment than we are of our religion itself. This martyr complex has its origin in history and its growth in our social relations. No one denies the injustice of it or the reality of its existence.

Let us concede past injustice, let us concede our martyrdom, but let us do more than this: let us consider the unfortunate effect we Jews produce when we interpret the events of daily life in terms of the past history of our group. When we constantly think of ourselves as Jews first and then as individuals, can we wonder that the world accepts our perverted sense of values? That twisted conception may be understood easily in the light of brutal history, but its effect on each of us is no less devastating. It is with the effects of our persecution complex, rather than its causes, that I am concerned.

"PREJUDICE" AS AN ALIBI

THE MARTYR complex makes us abnormal in dealing with our neighbors, first of all, because of its effect on us as individuals. There are few Jews who have been penalized in some way by society for personal shortcomings who

WHERE THE JEWS FAIL

have had the courage to admit that the fault might rest within the compass of their personal make-up. A man's vanity is a precious thing; without it, his poise and self-assurance are gone, his morale is shattered. He must preserve his vanity or live up to it, at all costs. It is true of human nature generally that men seek the blame for failure everywhere but at their own doorstep. This is a common rationalization for the purpose of preserving our worth in our own eyes.

How perfectly normal, then, is the Jew who fails to get a job or make a club or sell an order, because he falls below the personal standards required for success in his particular endeavor, and who says, "They were prejudiced; it was because I'm Jewish." We diverge from the normal when this becomes a mental habit with which we constantly salve the wounds of all our failures; then the fault ceases to be normal and becomes a persecution complex.

We Jews should give less attention to Shakespeare's Shylock and more consideration to his Cassius, who said:

*The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.*

The use of an alibi to hide personal deficiency usually begins early in life. I recall that in school our teacher gave a generous discourse on the Jews, using as a text the character of Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*, which we were studying at the time. During the class, Mose Levy was called on for recitation. Having neglected to study, he tried to bluff but failed miserably. The next day I was called to the office of the principal of the school to testify on behalf of the distraught teacher, whose job was imperiled by the highly indignant mother of Mose. The youngster had told his mother that Teacher hated him, and "picked on" him because he was Jewish. He had been humiliated in class. Teacher had said very unkind things about Rebecca. Mrs. Levy demanded that the embarrassed principal discharge Teacher for maltreating her brilliant and long-suffering Mose. Teacher nearly lost her job because the principal did not care for the publicity attendant on a hearing of the unfounded charges, if brought before the school board. Teacher was transferred, and Mose showed up in class a week later, grinning impudently at the new instructress.

I went to a prominent Eastern college, and

my four years there mean more to me than anything that has yet occurred in my life. I had several informal talks with the dean about Jewish students. He pointed out that fifteen per cent of the entire student body were Jewish, yet the college had been charged with discrimination in admissions. Several distinguished members of the faculty were Jews, and one was serving on the board of admissions. The dean cited many examples where the administrative officers and the faculty had leaned over backward to be helpful to their Jewish students. Yet I saw on his daybook that an astounding number of Jewish parents had made equally astonishing charges based on an assumption of prejudice, usually because their sons had failed to make a team, a fraternity, or an office or had failed a course of study.

Please remember that I am speaking of these particular boys and many like them when I say that I knew from daily contact that they were a lot of dirty, greasy, uncouth, unmannered,



Jewish Type: Russian

lazy, spoiled youngsters who constantly carried a chip on the shoulder — who would have been just as completely undesirable if they had been Presbyterians or Confucianists and who



Jewish Type: Belgian Boy

were ignored by their fellow Jews. They felt that the world had set them apart for perpetual social persecution and consequently carried a grudge against everybody. Their minor successes were due to blackmail; the college authorities gave them more consideration than any other students, for fear that some morning the world would awaken to read charges of flagrant discrimination rampant in the very home of the truth and the light.

JUDAISM — RELIGION OR REFUGE?

AN INFINITE number of examples could be given, covering every phase of life and every type of Jew. Examples are only cumulative in effect and afford no fair basis for generalization. The principles on which they are founded still apply generally. There are many, many cases of actual prejudice. This does not obscure the fact that too often the prejudice ascribed to race and religion is a completely justified personal one, or else it is imagined; that even where real prejudice does exist it is frequently due to incidents for which the Jew is largely responsible and where he is the first to inject the issue into the case.

Strange though it may seem, most Gentiles are human beings and are fundamentally fair-minded. They think in terms of individuals and judge individuals on their own merits. To the majority of Gentiles, what a man thinks of God and what he does on Sunday are private matters belonging to the class of nonessentials as far as the activities of the market place are concerned. Gentiles don't like to talk about the "Jewish problem" because they recognize that it casts a rather shadowy reflection on their sense of fair play. It is the Jew with the chip on his shoulder, the martyr complex, who creates false issues and makes Gentiles dread him.

I believe we Jews will never be normal individuals so long as we maintain and foster our martyr complex, so long as we remain shy of self-appraisal and self-improvement, and so long as we find it easier to blame the other fellow for our own faults.

This, briefly, has been the effect on the make-up of the individual Jew of his martyr complex. His perpetually outraged sense of justice also affects his attitude toward Judaism. He proudly embraces his religion as a protest and not as a conviction. ("What if I *am* a Jew? I'm proud of it!")

When a Jew is blackballed by a club, when a Hitler unleashes his fanatic fury, or when the Ku Klux Klan corners the nightshirt market, the Jew bumps his head against reality and recognizes that, even though he may never go to Temple, he is still a Jew as far as the world is concerned. He returns a little closer to the fold because of the external stimulus. Judaism may be preserved by such pressure from the outside, but its vitality must grow from within. Too often it is the martyr complex that makes a Jew come back to Judaism. While he may be an ardent Jew because the world persists in reminding him of that fact, he is not an intelligent Jew and is therefore only a quantitative, rather than a qualitative, asset. Neither Judaism nor its adherents profit by this awakening of the individual Jewish consciousness. The reaction does not make for a strong religious group or for individuals in whom religion is strong.

THE PREJUDICE AGAINST GENTILES

THERE IS an old Talmudic maxim; "Deena d'malchutha deena" — "The law of the land is paramount." Despite their intensified Jewish consciousness, Jewish businessmen

continue to slip away from all organized expressions of Judaism and like to blame not themselves but their business. They state that they cannot afford to close up their business on Saturday, the Sabbath, because competition is too keen; they do not walk to religious services because they live miles away from the synagogue; they do not follow orthodox religious procedure in marriage and divorce because "the law of the land is paramount" — when in Rome, do as the Romans do.

Curiously enough, while these statements were probably made in all sincerity, their fallacy was indicated to some extent by the National Recovery Act. Of course, no accurate figures are available, but I am informed by personal observers and by rabbis conversant with the subject that in New York City, the center of the garment trade, which is predominantly Jewish, when the NRA shortened working hours in that trade and obviated the necessity of working on Saturday, attendance at religious services did not increase in the slightest. This is probably true of other industries and localities also. It would appear to be a fair conclusion that many Jews are not being honest with themselves when they blame their environment and the conditions in which they live for their religious laxity.

Observable in the individual Jew as well as in his religious expression is the proverbial desire of the worm to turn. A person with an inferiority complex or a martyr complex harbors a desire to hit back blindly against fate and does not hesitate to do so. The appearance of a Gentile at any Jewish social function is frequently severely criticized by those very Jews who are most anxious to gain recognition in Gentile social functions.

If a Jew commits that most heinous of all offenses and marries a Gentile, he feels the full force of the prejudice which Jews have built around themselves in the guise of self-protection. Quite aside from the many sound obstacles to such a step, based on social, temperamental, or religious complexities, Jews who never go to Temple and all of whose friends are Gentiles feel that they have suffered a personal affront — to put it simply, they feel that the Jew has gone to the enemy if he marries a Gentile. Much pressure is brought to bear on the couple in an effort to make the Gentile become Jewish (as if mere religious study or spoken acqui-



Jewish Type: Galician Student

escence can accomplish the metamorphosis!). One explanation, of course, rests in the fact that the Jews are a numerical minority and defections in the ranks are a serious matter. Most Jews, however, are not concerned so much with their numerical strength as they are with their own prejudices and the satisfaction to be derived from expressing resentment toward the most available Gentile, who in this case is hardly in a position to hit back.

INCONSISTENCY IN MARTYRDOM

THE FAR-REACHING consequences of the martyr complex go beyond any effect on the individual Jew and the practice of his religion and beyond the narrowing prejudice with which he confronts Gentiles. The insidious martyr complex and its many manifestations do not leave unmarked even the most kindly and sympathetically inclined Gentiles.

I prefaced my case by stating that friendly Gentiles fear to offer timely and constructive criticism, lest they be accused of prejudice. Such persons as my high-school teacher, the dean of my college, sincere writers on the subject have all, as a rule, been confined to the ex-

pression of pious platitudes, lest it be thought that the slightest word of criticism carried a tinge of animus. Individuals always find it hard to accept criticism, even when they know that it usually springs from a genuinely sympathetic interest in their welfare. Jews are individuals. Add to that their martyr complex, and anything more than gentle exhortations extolling "tolerance and understanding" becomes freighted with dynamite highly injurious to friendly intercourse between the groups.

By thus cutting off honest criticism and any attempt at constructive evaluation of the very real differences and prejudices existing, the Jew guards himself against one of the most healthful balances any man can have — the point of view based on a broad perspective.

The newspapers of the country intermittently carry items stating that committees of indignant Jews have protested against the study of *The Merchant of Venice* in schools or against the exhibition of certain motion pictures. Unfortunately there have been several motion pictures which have merited strong protest. But certainly any objection to the character of Shylock can be based only on an almost total ignorance of the play in which he appears. Shylock's eloquent speech pointing out that the Jew is not only a human being but is a man first and a religionist subordinately is one of the most moving and persuasively powerful pleas in literature. Yet the repressive attitude taken by Jews in whom the martyr complex is strong serves as a threat and a boycott, stifling honest thought and expression as effectively as any official index expurgatorius.

The great tragedy of the group attitude I have attempted to outline, in its superficial phases at least, is the fundamental inconsistency on the part of those Jews who are most sincerely anxious to have the world accept

them as individuals and who want to keep their religion where it belongs — a part of their private life from which the world is excluded.

The Jew, who is certainly primarily an individualist, forgets his group reactions, overlooks the religious issues and human problems to which his martyr complex contributes, and complains bitterly because he is not accepted by the world as an individual first and a Jew second. He forgets that his first reaction is that of a Jew; that perhaps his failure to get a job is due to dirty fingernails rather than a Semitic nose. If a daily newspaper should state that "Isaac Rubens, 26, Jewish, robbed the Smith grocery last night," every Jew in town would be up in arms against the editor for publication of the gratuitous label. But, if Albert Einstein presents a revolutionary scientific theory, those same Jews glow with satisfaction at references to "the great Jewish scientist." We must decide whether we want the world to think of us as individuals or as Jews.

It is pointless to fight the blind prejudice which does exist. It is born of stupidity and emotion. Neither is vulnerable to logic and reason. Let us rather reconstruct our relations with those Gentiles who are reasonable human beings. We can never do this if we dwell bitterly on the injustices we have met and for which these reasonable Gentiles are not responsible. Recriminations breed only self-righteousness and a strengthened spirit of martyrdom. Let us not look at our Gentile neighbors only with accusing eyes; let us have the strength to turn our eyes and thoughts inward. Let us look to the promise of the future rather than the scars of the past, and then, perhaps, we may find it possible to be at once good Jews as well as good neighbors. It will be easy then, because we shall have returned from the Wailing Wall to the normal paths of life.

Next month:

"Make Peace with Your Landlord,"

by Janet Mabie